

REMARKS

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 20-23 and 25-39 remain pending and under current examination. In the Office Action,¹ the Examiner:

- (a) objected to the disclosure for informalities;
- (b) objected to the drawings;
- (c) objected to the claims for informalities;
- (d) rejected claims 20-23, 25, 29, and 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,630,875 to Mizoguchi et al. ("Mizoguchi") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,218,915 to Schallner ("Schallner");
- (e) rejected claims 32-37 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mizoguchi in view of Schallner and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,360,112 to Mizuno et al. ("Mizuno");
- (f) rejected claims 38 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mizoguchi in view of Schallner and Mizuno, and further in view of U.S. Patent App. Pub. No. US2002/0130730A1 to Abdelmonem et al. ("Abdelmonem");
- (g) objected to claims 24, 26-28, and 31 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim.

Applicants respectfully traverse the objections and rejections, though respond as follows in order to advance prosecution.

Objection to the Disclosure:

The Examiner made multiple objections to the disclosure for informalities, individually identifying ten separate pages in the disclosure. In response, Applicants have amended the

¹ The Office Action contains statements characterizing the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statements are specifically identified herein, Applicants decline to automatically subscribe to any statements in the Office Action.

disclosure as indicated above, in eighteen locations, to both address the Examiner's objections and to correct typographical errors.

Applicants also respectfully disagree with the Examiner's objection to page 10, lines 4 and 22, regarding whether "conductive" should be inserted prior to "structures" "for an appropriate characterization" (line 4) and whether "'region" should be rewritten as --regions-- for consistency in tense" (line 22). Office Action, p. 2. Applicants submit that a reading of the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 25, and ending on page 10, line 6, clearly indicates that "conventional" is the correct term at line 4 on page 10. Moreover, a reading of the paragraph at page 10, lines 20-27 clearly indicates that "region" is in the correct tense as it appears in line 22.

Accordingly, Applicants deem the Examiner's objections to the disclosure overcome, and request their withdrawal.

Objection to the Drawings:

Applicants have amended Figs. 8 and 9 to include designations for f_0 , f_1 , f_2 , and Δf , respectively. In addition, Applicants submit that all "respective parameters along the vertical axis of the corresponding graphs" are appropriately and adequately labeled. Applicants request that these replacement sheets be made of official record in the above-identified patent application. Accordingly, Applicants deem the objection to the drawings overcome and request its withdrawal.

Objections to the Claims:

In response to the Examiner's objection to claims 20-23, 26, 28, 32, 38, and 39, Applicants have amended claims 20, 22, 23, 28, 32, 38, and 39. Applicants respectfully disagree, however, with the Examiner's suggested amendment to claim 21, as the claim is adequately clear "for an appropriate characterization" (Office Action, p. 4) as written. Likewise,

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's objection to claim 26, noting that moving the word "edges" within the identified phrase of the claim does nothing to improve its clarity or its "appropriate characterization." Office Action, p. 4. Accordingly, Applicants deem these objections to the claims overcome and request their withdrawal.

Rejections of the Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a):

Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 20-23, 25, 29, 30, and 32-39 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on one or more combinations of the Mizoguchi, Schallner, Mizuno, and Abdelmonem references. The rejections of these claims have been overcome by the incorporation of the allowable subject matter of now-cancelled claim 24 into independent claim 20. Independent claim 20 is therefore allowable, and dependent claims 21-23, 25, 29, 30, and 32-39 are also allowable at least by virtue of their dependence from allowable base claim 20. Applicants therefore respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections.

Objection to Claims 24, 26-28, and 31:

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 24, 26-28, and 31. By incorporating the allowable subject matter of now-cancelled claim 24 into base claim 20, Applicants submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Conclusion:

Applicants request reconsideration of the application and withdrawal of the objections and claim rejections. Pending claims 20-23 and 25-39 are in condition for allowance, and Applicants request a favorable action. If there are any remaining issues or misunderstandings, Applicants request the Examiner telephone the undersigned representative to discuss them.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: April 23, 2008

By: 

David M. Longo
Reg. No. 53,235

/direct telephone: (571) 203-2763/